

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BBAK, SL

SUBJECT: CLOTHING SHIPMENT TO SIERRA LEONE

1. THE OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE IS INVESTIGATING A SUPPOSEDLY CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION THAT COLLECTED 41.5 TONS OF CLOTHING IN THE DAYTON AREA FOR SHIPMENT TO SIERRA LEONE. THE COMPANY, NOVO INTERNATIONAL, SHIPPED THE CLOTHES TO FREETOWN SEVERAL MONTHS AGO TO ITS AGENT ALPHA O. JALLOH, PRESIDENT OF ALPHA WORLD ENTERPRISES. UNDER AN ALLEGED ARRANGEMENT JALLOH WAS TO DELIVER THE CLOTHES DUTY FREE AND AT COST TO THE GOSL. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY REFUSED THE CLOTHING AND THE COMPANY WAS REQUIRED TO PAY \$20 THOUSAND IN CUSTOMS DUTIES. TO RECOUP IT ARRANGED TO SELL THE CLOTHING, REPORTEDLY FOR 70-80 CENTS PER POUND, ON THE OPEN MARKET.

2. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S EVALUATION OF ALPHA WORLD ENTERPRISES AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH AN

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ARRANGEMENT. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE WOULD LIKE SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING:

A) DOES THE GOSL EVER ACCEPT SHIPMENTS OF CLOTHES FROM CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE US AND, IF SO, UNDER WHAT

TERMS? WOULD IT COVER SHIPPING COSTS?

B) DOES THE GOSL DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN IMPORTS FROM CHARITABLE AND NON-CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS? WHAT WOULD THE CORRESPONDING CUSTOMS DUTIES BE IN EACH CATEGORY FOR 41.5 TONS OF CLOTHING?

C) WHAT IS THE DOLLAR/LEONE EXCHANGE RATE, AND HAS IT VARIED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS?

3. BECAUSE THIS CASE IS COMING UP IN COURT SOON, WE WOULD APPRECIATE A RESPONSE BY COB JULY 27. VANCE

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